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12 March 1964

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CENTRAL

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BULLETIN



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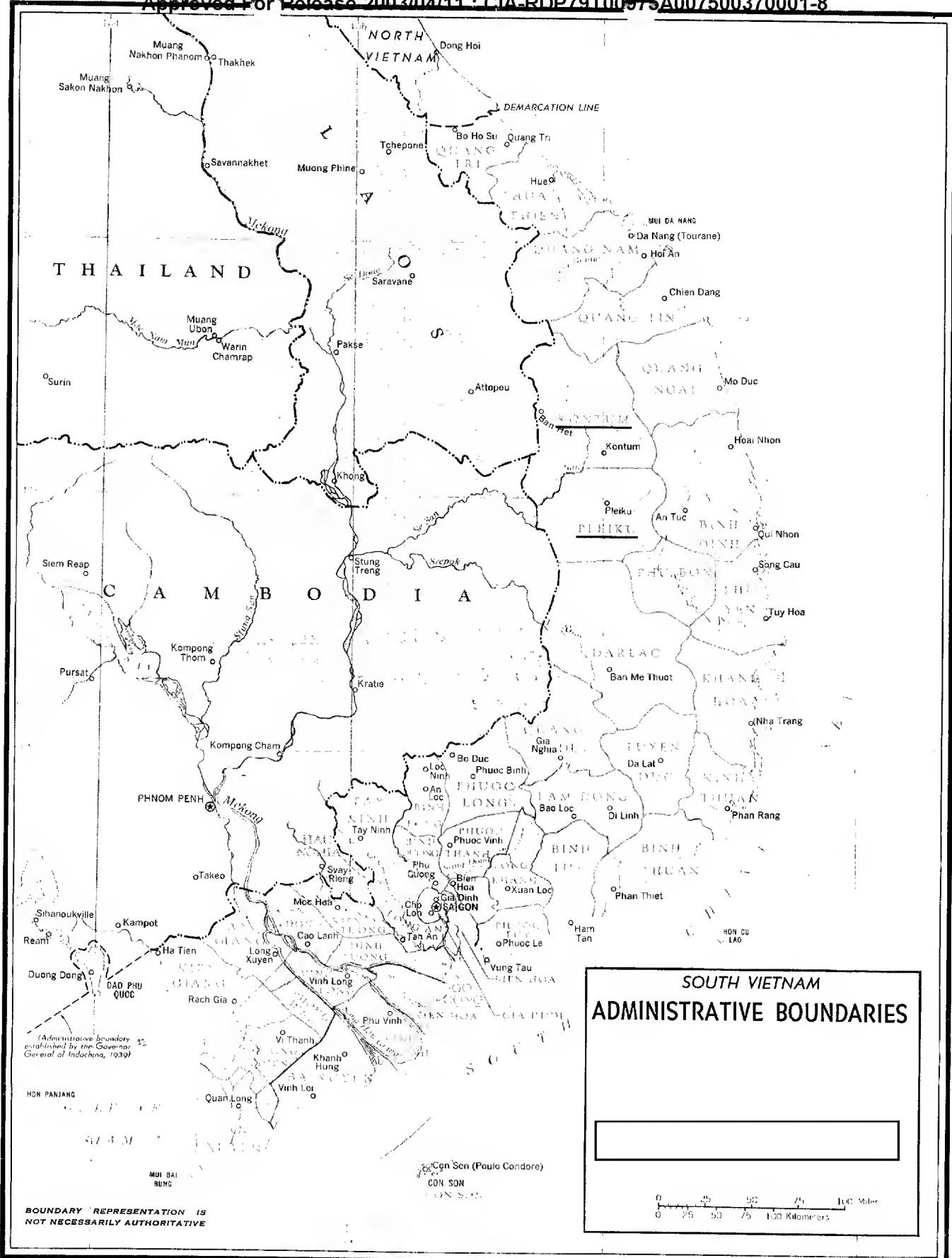
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* South Vietnam: Confidence in the Khanh regime appears to be increasing in the northern part of South Vietnam, but there are some disquieting trends.

According to the American consul in Hué, army morale appears good throughout the region. Civilian attitudes show "some slight steadyng."

Some officials, however, are still refusing to take any initiative on government programs, fearing further personnel shake-ups. In the eight northernmost provinces, two province chiefs have been replaced in the past three weeks, a third is scheduled for early replacement, and there are rumors that three more may be changed.

Government settlements in the highland provinces of Kontum and Pleiku have suffered considerable deterioration since November, partly through the recall of weapons issued to local militia.

In Pleiku, of 181 earlier alleged "completed" strategic hamlets, only 44 now have weapons, and at least 3,000 inhabitants have left 14 land development centers. The majority of hamlets appear open to Viet Cong entry. Road security in the province has also deteriorated.

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Guatemala: The Peralta government plans an early return to constitutional government, but this may be upset by an outbreak of student disturbances.

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The government has decided to lift the "state of siege" that has been in force for nearly a year on 24 March,

The regime's schedule is also said to provide for an election in May for a constituent assembly that would convene in July.

The government's plans, however, may be affected by a student parade scheduled for 20 March in Guatemala City. Similar parades have gotten out of hand before, and there is a chance that extremists will try to turn this one into a violent antigovernment demonstration, although the government is prepared to make it difficult for them to do so. Trouble of this sort might provide the Communists an opening to begin a campaign of urban terrorism, a tactic they reportedly are preparing to use.

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